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ANALYSIS OF KIDS UP FRONT

MGIS 317 LO4 GROUP 410 – THE SUBSCRIBERS

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This report is submitted in accordance with the formal requirements for the course MGIS 317 in the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary. This report has been prepared as part of an academic exercise under the guidance of the Instructor, Dr. Mohammad Rahman, and contains information only and not advice. Please note that one or more students prepared this report and recommendations are implemented solely at the responsibility of the client or involved organization. The authors, the Instructor, the Haskayne School of Business, and the University of Calgary assume no responsibility for the results obtained in its implementation.

Executive Summary

Kids Up Front Calgary (KUF) is a local non-profit organization dedicated to providing underprivileged children with the opportunity to attend arts, culture, sports and recreation events. The organization, founded in 2000, has expanded with chapters in Toronto, Vancouver, and Edmonton. The Calgary chapter of the organization runs two programs – ‘Can’t use your ticket?’ collects ticket donations from corporations, individuals and entertainment events, and distributes them to agencies working with underprivileged children, while ‘Kids Count!’ raises money to send children to special events designed by KUF. The organization is looking at redesigning their website to better serve their stakeholders.

The organization and its website were assessed through quantitative and qualitative methods across eight critical success factors (adding value, focusing on a niche...then extending, maintaining flexibility, getting the technology right, managing critical perceptions, providing excellent customer service, creating effective connectedness, and understanding Internet culture) outlined in prior literature. To assist with the assessment, a timed and recorded usability study was conducted with 6 participants performing tasks commonly performed by ticket donors and partner agencies.

KUF attempts to add value through convenience, choice, informative value, and re-intermediation. While the website provides a great deal of informative value, its poor organization and prioritization of information, as well as its lack of interactivity, limits choice, convenience, and re-intermediation.

KUF has established itself in a solid niche, and is able to focus on expansion. Horizontally, KUF has expanded geographically, but has not increased brand awareness. Vertically, its expansion into the ‘Kids Count’ program is still in its infancy. Overall, KUF is poised for future expansion in both directions. Maintaining flexibility is less relevant to KUF, as its business model does not depend on e-commerce. However, prevailing economic conditions may require KUF to adjust their marketing strategy.

The website operates at a basic level of web presence. The organization follows a ‘buy it and customize it’ approach to technology, having both a custom designed website and a customized database in Access™. Security management is addressed through anti-scalping and other information, as well as by outsourcing transactions to CanadaHelps.org and PayPal™.

KUF has a website lacking pictures of staff, making it impersonal and decreasing the customer’s perception of the organization’s presence. However, KUF has a very strong brand name, and needs to promote the brand more effectively. The lack of visual appeal and an FAQ page diminished the organization’s trustworthiness, while easy access to knowledgeable employees enhanced it. KUF is easily accessible through various communication methods, but the website’s incompatibility with FireFox™, difficult use, and steep learning curve decrease its ability to provide excellent customer service.

Due to its specific niche, it is difficult for KUF to increase its search engine visibility; however, clarifying web page titles, continuing to include the web address on business cards and brochures, and linking to more partner agencies will improve connectedness. Increasing the usability of the site will decrease user frustration, and better show appreciation of understanding Internet culture. The KUF website makes good use of contrast and repetition, but alignment and proximity of elements can be improved.

Overall, KUF scored 58.3% on critical success factor analysis. Recommendations to improve the site include personalizing user entry into the site, improving ease of use and navigation, providing interactive content and utilizing the website as a donation-generating tool.

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Introduction

“Almost overnight, the Internet has gone from a technical wonder to a business must.” With this quote, venture capitalist Bill Schrader effectively conveys the significance of maintaining an Internet presence for any business. This holds true for non-profit organizations as well, as they strive to maintain their existing revenue streams while expanding into new markets. Non-profit organizations increasingly use the Internet to increase their market base (Olson and Boyer 2005), through offerings such as online donations and brand promotion. Thus, it is clear that regardless of an organization’s size or profit motive, having an efficient and effective website is crucial to drawing and maintaining a market base.

This report addresses Kids Up Front Foundation Calgary, a relatively small non-profit organization. It begins with a description of the organization’s competitive context, followed by an analysis of the organization’s website using eight critical success factors. Finally, four key recommendations are made to improve the website’s efficacy.

Competitive Context

The Kids Up Front Foundation (KUF), with the vision “one little ticket, one big lift” (Kids Up Front Foundation 2006) is a non-profit organization providing access to arts, culture, sports and recreation events for children who would otherwise not get the opportunity. The foundation works closely with its partners (corporations, the entertainment community, individual donors and recipient agencies) as an intermediary, distributing unused tickets to and creating special events for underprivileged children.

Originally founded in 2000 in Calgary, KUF has grown over the last decade. KUF has expanded into Vancouver, Edmonton and Toronto; in 2006 a national KUF Foundation was incorporated, supporting the work of local chapters (Kids Up Front Foundation 2006). KUF Calgary is one of the four local chapters of the KUF foundation, running two main programs. The first, ‘Can’t use your ticket?’ collects donated

tickets from corporations, entertainers, and the general public, and distributes them to agencies working with children. The second program, 'Kids Count', is event-based, sending underprivileged children on vacations, horseback riding trips, and more (Kids Up Front Foundation Calgary 2006).

Overall, KUF plays a critical role as the intermediary between children in need and people and organizations wishing to help them. Its business model is unique, as it is the only organization providing "nourishment of the spirit" (Kids Up Front Foundation 2006) for underprivileged children through the distribution of unused event tickets. KUF has no direct competitors, allowing it to focus primarily on expanding its market base, instead of struggling to survive in a competitive market. However, since most non-profit organizations compete with one another indirectly for donors (Chetkovich and Frumkin 2003), KUF must ensure that it maintains its brand awareness.

Currently, KUF utilizes its website to give donors and partners more information about sponsors and partners, the program outcomes, and how to get involved with the organization. The website is also used to recognize the contributions of sponsors, partners and donors.

Methodology

The KUF website (<http://www.kidsupfront.com/CAL-about.htm>) was assessed through both quantitative and qualitative measures across eight critical success factors (CSFs; see table 1). The first step in this analysis was a weighting of each CSF (on a scale of 1-5, 5 being most important) based on its importance to the organization. Each CSF was then graded individually on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being best. The criteria used to grade the website for each CSF varied, and will be dealt with in the separate CSF sections of this report. Finally, a weighted average of these scores was calculated to arrive at an overall final grade.

To assist in assessing the KUF website, a usability study was conducted. This study involved 6 participants, varying in demographics, and in experience with KUF. The participants performed timed and recorded tasks (designed to mimic tasks performed by a potential donor or by a partner agency) and filled out a survey regarding their experiences. Quantitative data obtained from this study was standardized for typing, reading and connection speed prior to any statistical analysis (see Appendix A).

Table 1. Critical success factors used to analyze the KUF website, and their relative weights. See each CSF section for details on how weights were assigned.

Critical Success Factor (CSF)	Weight (scale of 1-5)
Add value	5
Focus on a niche...then extend	3
Maintain flexibility	1
Get the technology right	4
Manage critical perceptions	5
Excellent customer service	4
Create effective connectedness	2
Understand Internet culture	3

Critical Success Factors

CSF 1: Adding Value

If an organization is able to “convince visitors to remain on [their] website...and build rapport with them” (Korgaonkar, O’Leary and Silverblatt 2009), their online offering is adding value to the organization’s products or services, or to a business process. There are six main ways to add value to an organization’s products or services – convenience, informative value, disintermediation, re-intermediation, price, and choice (Huff, et al. 2000). Of these, the most relevant methods to KUF are convenience, choice, informative value and re-intermediation.

Adding value is the fundamental purpose behind organizational websites, and as such it has high relevance to any organization. This factor led to a relative weighting of this critical success factor as 5 out of 5. To score this CSF, KUF was assessed for adding value through convenience (2 points), choice (1 point), informative value (1 point), and re-intermediation (1 point), to reach a final score out of 5 points.

Analysis

To add value through convenience, an organization's website must "provide easier access to [its] goods or services through the web" (Haskayne School of Business MIS Department 2009). Easier access to services is achieved through efficient organization of the website, easily accessible contact information, and the utilization of indexing/search features (Greenspan 2002). KUF's website overwhelms the user, and its basic formatting techniques (such as blocks of text) make it difficult to find information and discourage usage. Additionally, important information is buried within lengthy web pages – for example, the Programs page lists the 'Scalping' section before the 'Get Involved!' section, implying ticket scalping has greater importance; in reality, however, scalping is a minor if not non-existent issue, while getting people to donate tickets and money is a high priority. The website additionally has no search feature, and while the partners and sponsors lists are alphabetized, they are displayed in a long, inconvenient list. Overall, the KUF website scores 0.5 out of a possible 2 points for adding value through convenience.

The addition of value through choice implies offering a variety of different products or services online, especially those not available offline (Haskayne School of Business MIS Department 2009). KUF's website does not accept donations of tickets, nor can users easily make monetary donations. However, the site promotes the physical donation of tickets, and to lesser extent monetary donations through CanadaHelps.org and PayPal™. As a result, the website scores 0.5 out of 1 for choice.

The KUF website adds great informative value to the organization. There is lots of information available on the site, including recent events, contact information, a full list of agency partners, sponsors and

other organizations, and information on how and where to donate tickets. The answer to nearly any question a person or organization would have about KUF can be found on the website. For this reason, the website scores 1 out of 1 for informative value.

Finally, KUF's business strategy involves differentiation as an intermediary between agencies working with underprivileged children and potential donors. The website for KUF plays a re-intermediation role, providing the information donors need to quickly donate tickets, while allowing the organization to select the most appropriate partner agencies to receive tickets. However, the website's lack of interactivity serves to alienate partner agencies and the very youth the organization works to help. Currently, the website does not allow donors to see thank-you cards from ticket recipients and does not allow for online ticket donation. As a result, the website scores 0.5 out of 1 for re-intermediation.

Overall, the KUF website scored a 2.5 out of a possible 5 points for adding value. The website is underutilized, and while it may be sufficient for the purposes of informing site visitors, KUF has many options that can be exploited to greatly increase the added value of the site.

CSF #2: Focus on a Niche... then Extend

In the majority of instances, carrying an 'average' or 'normal' lineup of products and services will not lend itself to success on the Internet, as the barriers to entry for an Internet-based venture are low when compared to other businesses (Huff, et al. 2000). Focusing on a niche market, with a specifically defined product offering aimed at satisfying particular market needs, is a far more successful strategy; it allows an organization to minimize competition and gain a loyal following. This niche is a launching pad, allowing the organization to expand both geographically and into a larger market segment.

For a non-profit, increasing competition for donors (Olson and Boyer 2005) makes starting with a niche market vital to the short term viability of the organization. Once the organization is established in its

niche market, it can move on to expansion, increasing its market share and also the aid it is able to provide to its target beneficiaries. Thus, this CSF was weighted at 3 out of 5 points. To grade this CSF, the presence of an initial niche market (2 points), vertical expansion to date (1 point), horizontal expansion to date (1 point), and being ready for further expansion (1 point) were assessed.

Analysis

KUF established itself in a niche market – they remain the only charitable organization in the city dedicated to the donation of unused event tickets to underprivileged children. Since KUF has a specific niche, *and* the organization was able to establish itself effectively, it gets 2 points. The niche market of KUF positions the organization well for expansion. First, KUF underwent a geographic expansion across Canada. This type of expansion, termed horizontal development, is an increase in volume, not in product offering (Todrin 2008). Finally, in 2006, a national umbrella organization was incorporated to support the local chapters, a move positioning KUF for future geographic expansion. However, individual ticket donations to KUF are fewer than both corporate and entertainment organization donations, largely due to a lack of brand awareness. As KUF is actively promoting and pursuing horizontal expansion, it scores 1 out of 1 point for this sub-criterion, though there is still room for improvement.

The second type of expansion is vertical expansion, or increasing your presence within the value chain. KUF has vertically expanded, offering the ‘Kids Count!’ program to go along with the ‘Can’t Use Your Ticket?’ initiative. Since KUF plays a much larger role in planning for ‘Kids Count!’ events as compared to the ‘Can’t Use Your Ticket?’ initiative, this represents a vertical expansion towards the supply side. However, this program is small and rare, and thus KUF only scores 0.5 out of 1 for this sub-criterion. Finally, KUF has positioned itself extremely well for expansion, both geographically and by increasing their market segment. As a result, the organization gets 1 out of 1 for prospective future expansion.

Overall, KUF scored a 4.5 out of a possible 5 points for this CSF. The organization is expanding geographically and is also providing a broader range of donation methods and programs, and will be able to expand their operations quite easily as soon as resources allow for this.

CSF #3: Maintain Flexibility

The maintenance of flexibility entails an organization positioning itself to be ready to “make radical shifts in strategy in order to be successful” (Huff, et al. 2000). A slow response on the part of a company can be the difference between success and bankruptcy (Huff, et al. 2000).

While the maintenance of flexibility is vital to success of an e-commerce business, it is far less relevant for a local charitable organization. The business strategy of the organization involves a stable concept (there will be unused tickets to events for as long as people have events to go to), and thus this CSF is less important. As a result, this CSF was given a weight of 1 out of a possible 5 points. Scoring of this CSF was based on 2 points for preparedness to respond to unexpected externalities, and 3 points for the flexibility to cater to different stakeholders based on prevailing economic conditions.

Analysis

For KUF, making radical shifts in business strategy is not a relevant concern. However, KUF may be forced to shift how it markets itself depending upon prevailing economic conditions. For example, if the price of oil falls, it is likely corporate support for KUF would drop. In this scenario, KUF must alter their marketing, catering to individual donors or entertainment organizations such as the Calgary Flames. Discrepancies in information found on the website are another issue. Due to poor organization, and repetition of information on the website, when information on is updated in one place, it often is not updated in another. This leads to discrepancies, which in turn have the effect of driving potential customers away (Jones 2009). An example of this is on the homepage where two ticket drop-off locations are listed, while the ‘Make a Donation’ page has only one location listed. Half of the

participants in the usability study were unable to find the address of the second location, because they only looked on the 'Make a Donation' page. Overall, the KUF website can be compared to a database that has not been normalized (Kroenke, Gemino and Tingling 2008); when a change is made to the website, data integrity errors may occur, because the change needs to be entered into multiple pages on the website. Due to this, the KUF website is not very flexible. KUF scored 1 out of 2 for organizational preparedness, and 1 out of 3 for the flexibility of the website, leading to a total score for this CSF of 2.

CSF #4: Get the Technology Right

In order to 'get the technology right', one must consider the level of commercial web presence, decision to rent or own equipment, as well as security management and scalability issues (Huff, et al. 2000). The level of web presence depends on interaction between the user and site, as well as whether the information on the site is static or dynamic. The decision to rent or own equipment is important, especially for small organizations that usually do not have resources to support an IT system. Security management is an issue whenever personal information is being shared with an organization; smaller organizations are unlikely to find it affordable, and are more likely to outsource it. Finally, one must also consider the future – when volume drastically increases, will the site be able to function at its normal speed, or will it crash? Answering these questions is critical to assessing whether or not an organization is using the 'right' technology.

Selecting the right technology for an organization's needs is a very important task. Choosing the wrong technology can have incredibly high costs; since IT projects have a 25% failure rate regardless of their size (Sauer, Gemino and Reich 2007), the potential for loss is very high. This is especially dangerous for non-profit organizations that generally stretch their budgets already (Olson and Boyer 2005). As a result, this CSF was assigned a weight of 4 out of 5. For this CSF, points were awarded for the level of

commercial web presence (3 points), the decision to rent or own equipment (0.5 points), scalability (0.5 points) and security management (1 point).

Analysis

The KUF website is primarily an information resource; thus it is considerably simple, with scarce user interaction. The vast majority of the website is at a “basic level”, providing static information (Huff, et al. 2000). The one portion of the website that may be considered to be interactional in nature would be the ‘What’s New’ page, though even this page is not updated on a consistent basis. It is important to keep in mind the amount of work required to increase a website’s operational level for e-commerce – it has been estimated a site becomes 10 times as difficult to operate for each level up (e.g. from basic to interactional) (Huff, et al. 2000). However, the benefits usually far outweigh the costs, especially in today’s society. For having a basic level of web presence, KUF gets 1 out of 3 points.

In terms of renting versus owning technological equipment, KUF follows a ‘buy it and customize it’ approach. The organization’s database is a database within Microsoft Access™, developed specifically for the organization. KUF is currently looking at redeveloping their website, using a template already adopted by KUF Edmonton. Web pages will be customized by the organization itself using Adobe™ Dreamweaver software. While one would expect an organization like KUF to be renting technology, the ‘buy-and-customize’ choice is a smart decision, as it increases the scalability of both the database and the website. KUF scores 0.5 out of 0.5 for the decision to rent or own, and 0.5 out of 0.5 for scalability.

Security management is important when dealing with monetary transactions. To address these concerns, the organization’s registered charity number and anti-scalping policy are both made accessible on the website, while tax receipts persuade users that KUF is legitimate. Finally, donations of money online are via CanadaHelps.org or PayPal™, third party sites with good reputations. As such, for security management, KUF gets 1 point.

Overall, KUF scored 1/3 points for operational web presence, 1/1 point for scalability and rent/own decision, and 1/1 point for security management, leading to a total score of 3 points.

CSF #5: Manage Critical Perceptions

Managing the critical perceptions of a website requires an organization to design the site to attract potential customers. Huff et al. (2000) notes it also means an organization must strive to ensure customers perceive its presence, its brand, and its trustworthiness through the site. To ensure a potential customer perceives an organization's presence, it needs to make the individual feel the organization has physical existence, and is not simply a virtual construct (Huff, et al. 2000). This is achieved by displaying pictures and descriptions of staff members to give the organization a 'face'.

Brand strength, defined as "the relative power of attraction of a given brand versus other brands" (Woodside and Walser 2007), is influenced by brand exposure, a person's experience with the brand, and by how easy or 'catchy' the brand name or tagline is.

Finally, Huff et al. (2000) state a customer's perception of trustworthiness is by far the most critical perception of an organization. Due to the lack of face-to-face interaction, the Internet fosters a sense of inherent distrust that must be overcome by organizations. Building a trusting relationship with a customer (or donor) involves simplifying the process for a customer to personally contact the organization, maintaining communication with the customer throughout the process, securing the process to make the customer feel safe, providing a useful frequently asked questions (FAQ) page, displaying a privacy policy clearly, and removing any 'surprises' during the transaction (Huff, et al. 2000).

The experience a customer has with a website strongly influences their perception of the whole organization, and can determine whether or not the customer returns to the organization later; thus the management of critical perceptions is crucial to the success of any online endeavors. Additionally, an

organization's website is often the first point of contact, from which the customer forms an initial impression of the organization. Thus, managing critical perceptions was given a weight of 5 out of 5. To grade this CSF, points were available for establishing an offline presence through the website (1 point), building a brand with sufficient exposure and accessibility into memory (1 point), and building trustworthiness through simplified human contact and a professional look and feel (1 point), secured transaction processes and a visible privacy policy (1 point), and the presence of an FAQ page (1 point).

Analysis

Since KUF acts as an intermediary, as opposed to providing a good, there is a lack of tangibility; this reduces a donor's perception of the presence of KUF. To counter this situation, KUF has a 'What's New' page with pictures of events; however, the only person representing KUF in the pictures is Kari Scarlett, the executive director. The lack of other staff members or children serves to disconnect the donor from KUF, decreasing its legitimacy. This holds true for the 'Contact Us' page of the website, where no pictures or descriptions of staff members are listed, giving KUF a very impersonal feel. Overall, while KUF has taken steps to increase perception of their offline presence through their website, a number of improvements could still be made, resulting in a score of 0.5 out of 1 for this sub-criterion.

On the other hand, KUF has an incredibly catchy and effective brand name, relating directly to the services they provide; the name also emphasizes the organization's priority – children. Phrases like this increase the accessibility of a brand into memory. However, the brand exposure of KUF is very limited, as potential donors are unable to see benefits of donating tickets while online. This can be compared to the KUF Edmonton site, which has a 'scrapbook' page of thank-you cards. The other factor limiting brand exposure of KUF is limited utilization of marketing partnerships with organizations like the Calgary Flames. As a result of this, very few people in the public have heard of KUF. Based on the strength of the brand name, but relatively low brand exposure, KUF scored 0.5 out of 1 in this sub-criterion.

Finally, the perception of the trustworthiness of KUF is vital to its success as a non-profit organization. The first factor addressing this is the website's overall look and feel, which was rated quite poorly by all usability test subjects. When asked about donating money to KUF, 50% of users responded they would *not* feel comfortable. When asked how KUF could make them feel safer, two users replied the tackiness of the website itself made them distrust KUF. However, when the usability test subjects attempted to contact KUF, their trust of the organization increased as phone calls were answered quickly, and users felt queries were answered to their satisfaction by employees. Since the website did not have a look and feel conducive to building trusting relationships, KUF scored 0.5 out of 1 for this sub-criterion.

The second aspect of trustworthiness was the prominence of the privacy policy and the securing of transactions. KUF has a clearly worded and comprehensive privacy policy available on their website. Additionally, the only transaction a user can complete on the KUF website is a monetary donation, and to complete that the user must go to a third party (CanadaHelps.org or PayPal™). This is an effective system, as KUF does not have the resources to ensure the safety and security of their donors' banking information. CanadaHelps.org has the resources and security in place to ensure donor safety. Also adding to the perception of trustworthiness is the receipt of thank-you cards from children and thank-you letters from KUF. Since a clear privacy policy is in place and transactions are outsourced to a more secure vendor, KUF scores 1 out of 1 for this sub-criterion.

Finally, frequently asked questions (FAQ) pages help potential customers find important and relevant information about the organization quickly. These FAQ pages serve to dissuade customers' fears, and build up trust between the organization and the individual. KUF does not have an FAQ page, forcing users of the website to navigate long, cluttered and poorly organized web pages to find the information they need. One usability study subject became so frustrated with trying to find information on the website that they stated "sitting here searching for information may just change my mind about

donating – it's not worth the hassle". Had there been an FAQ page, this user would likely have had her answer in seconds, rather than being frustrated for nearly five minutes before giving up entirely. Since there is no FAQ page, KUF scores 0 out of 1 for this sub-criterion.

Overall, KUF scored 2.5/5 for this CSF, due to the lack of an FAQ page, the unprofessional look and feel of the website, and poor brand exposure.

CSF #6: Excellent Customer Service

Providing excellent customer service can be simplified into two key aspects; these aspects are responsiveness and accessibility (Huff, et al. 2000). Improving responsiveness for non-profit organizations involves improving relationships with donors and streamlining the donation process (Polansky and Sargeant 2007). One measure of accessibility concerns the number of different methods by which the organization can be reached, including phone, facsimile, e-mail, website, in person, or by regular mail. For a website specifically, accessibility has been defined to include the ability of the website to function appropriately across multiple browsers and hardware/software platforms (Teoh, et al. 2009). Additionally, the accessibility of a website encompasses issues such as addressing frequently asked questions via an FAQ page (Huff, et al. 2000). Lastly, all web pages must load quickly and with the correct information (i.e. no broken links). As an intermediary, KUF has to deal with various 'customer' bases, including donors, sponsors, partner agencies, and to a limited extent even children. Since KUF has to provide excellent customer service to these groups, this CSF was given a weight of 4 out of 5.

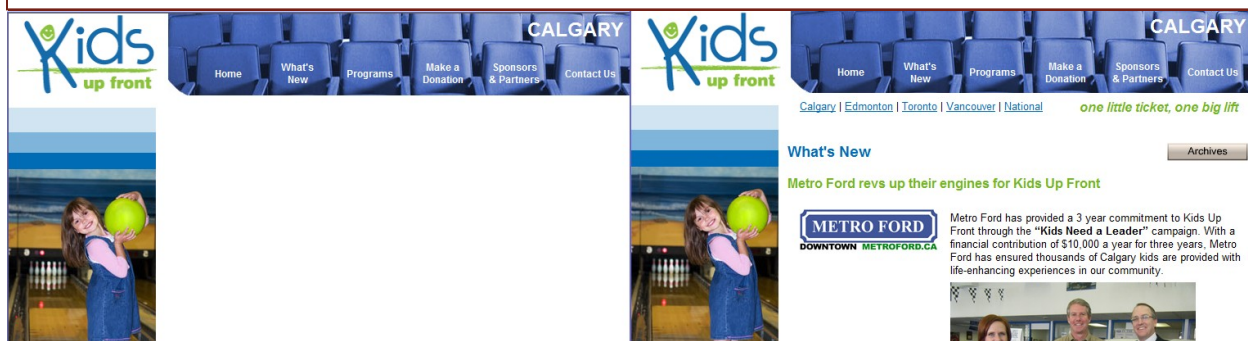
Firstly, KUF was graded out of 1 point for providing contact information for various communication methods. Secondly, the organization was graded out of 1 point for its ability to function across different hardware and software platforms. Thirdly, the charity was given a score out of 1 point based on usability study participants' opinions of the website's ease of use. Fourthly, KUF was graded out of 1 point based on the steepness of the learning curve required for the website, as determined by the difference in time

required for experienced and novice users to complete tasks. Finally, the organization was given a grade out of 1 point based on the percentage of hyperlinks which were functioning properly (i.e. were not broken). Since the FAQ page was scored in CSF 5, it will not be scored again here.

Analysis

The 'Contact Us' page of the KUF website provides four e-mail addresses, two phone numbers, a fax number, and a mailing address, without even requiring the site user to scroll along the page (Kids Up Front Foundation Calgary 2006). Additionally, if the user scrolls down the page, they are able to see the mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses for the Board of Directors and Officers of the organization. This is an excellent source of information for customers, and as a result, KUF scores a full 1/1 in this criterion. However, when the KUF website was compared across different web browsers, errors were found. An example of this is shown in figure 1, depicting the 'What's New' page fully loaded in Mozilla Firefox™ (version 3.55) on the left, and Microsoft Internet Explorer™ (version 8.06) on the right. In order to see the content on the page in Firefox, the user has to scroll down the page. However, it appears as if the page has not loaded, and during the usability study, users were observed waiting for

Figure 1. The 'What's New' page on the KUF website, fully loaded, in the Mozilla Firefox™ browser (left) and the Microsoft Internet Explorer browser (right).



this page to 'load' for up to 25 seconds after it was finished loading. These errors appear to be random as opposed to systematic, but as a result of inconsistencies like the one shown above, KUF's website scored only 0.5/1 in this criterion.

During the usability study, participants performed two tasks – in the first task, they played the role of a potential agency, seeking information on how to partner with KUF. In the second task, participants played the role of a ticket donor, and sought information regarding ticket donation on the website. For the ‘partner agency’ task, the ‘Ease of Use’ scores were distributed around a mean of 1.50/5. For the ‘ticket donor’ task, the ‘Ease of Use’ scores were distributed around a mean of 2.00/5, to give a final score of 0.35/1 for this criterion.

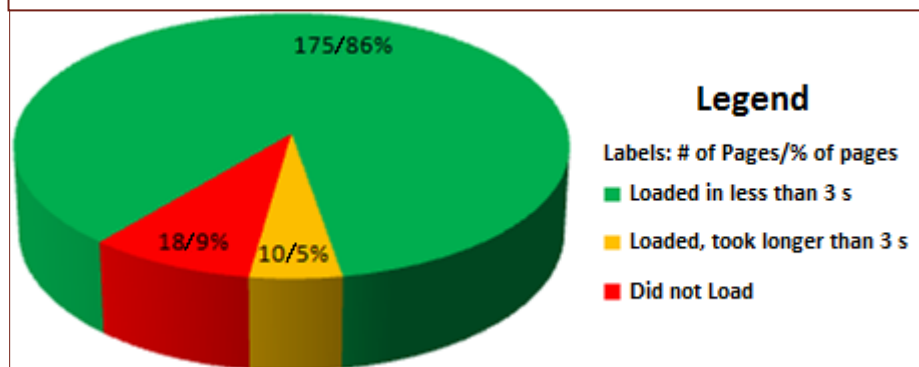
The fourth point was based on the steepness of the website’s learning curve. If a novice user takes significantly longer to perform a task compared to an experienced user, it is likely the site is difficult to navigate. Conversely, if there is no significant difference between experienced and novice users, the site’s navigation is likely intuitive. For the ‘partner agency’ task, novice users were found to take significantly longer than experienced users (one-tailed two-sample t-test, $t = 2.6972$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$, $\mu_{\text{novice}} = 376$ s, $\mu_{\text{experienced}} = 58.8$ s) to complete the task. Similarly, for the ‘ticket donor’ task, novice users once again took significantly longer to complete the task than experienced users (one-tailed two-sample t-test, $t = 5.6719$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$, $\mu_{\text{novice}} = 345$ s, $\mu_{\text{experienced}} = 86.8$ s). Since both tasks showed a significant learning curve for the KUF website, this criterion is scored as a 0/1.

Finally, every link on the KUF website was clicked and tested for load time. KUF web pages loaded quickly; 86% of pages

loaded within 3 seconds.

However, as shown in Figure 2, nearly 10% of links were broken. The final score for the KUF website for this was 0.65/1.

Figure 2. Web page loading times for 203 KUF links



Overall, KUF scored 2.5/5 on this CSF, largely because of the learning curve and frustration experienced by users during the usability assessment.

CSF #7: Create Effective Connectedness

Creating effective connectedness is related to building an online presence, allowing an organization to stand out from its competitors. Creating effective connectedness has three main parts. The first is increasing search engine visibility – research has shown that only 1% of Internet users will look beyond the third page of results from a search engine (Zhang and Dimitroff 2005). An organization can attempt to ensure it is in the top three pages through, among other things, the effective use of *metadata* (data that describes other data; for example, a number of keywords that describe the contents of a web site). As Zhang and Dimitroff (2005) determined, even minor changes to a website (such as including keywords in the title *and* full text of the page, and repeating keywords within the full text) significantly increases that website's ranking in search engine results. The second component of connectedness involves cross-linking with other websites to create 'web-wheels'; when a group of similar sites link to one another, they become a hub of information and their search engine rankings increase. Finally, when considering connectedness, an organization must consider the impact of advertising its website, both online and offline. As Huff et al. (2000) states, "the key point is that you cannot put up a web page then wait for the world to beat a path to your door. You also have to cut the path through the Internet jungle, and then spend time and money keeping the vines from growing back."

The relevance of this critical success factor to KUF currently is limited, as the organization has such a specific niche. Thus, marginal improvements in search engine ranking are not likely to be useful to the organization, as very specific keywords must be typed into the search in the first place. Keeping in mind that increasing brand awareness is becoming an area of concern for KUF, this CSF was given a weight of 2 out of 5. In scoring this CSF, one point was available for effective use of metadata, one point for

effective titles for web pages, one point for use of advertising (both offline and online) and two points for cross-linking with other websites.

Analysis

The KUF web site makes use of metadata, with keywords such as ‘Canadian kids charity’ and ‘tickets for kids’. However, the majority of the keywords (‘tickets for kids’ being the only exception) are related to the words ‘charitable organization’ or ‘charity’. The site is also very inconsistent in terms of page titles – some are incredibly vague (“Kids Up Front Foundation Calgary” on the ‘What’s New’ page), others obscure (“<MMString:LoadString id...” on the Programs page), and others are good (e.g. “KUF Sponsors and Partners”). KUF does not do much advertising due to their limited budget. However, their website is prominently displayed on brochures and employee business cards, an excellent step given the financial constraints restricting conventional advertising. Overall, KUF gets a 0.5/1 for use of metadata, 0.5/1 for use of titles, and 1/1 for advertising.

KUF has some cross-linking with their agency partners and sponsors. However, while the website has a full list of sponsors, ticket donors, and agency partners, none of these organizations have descriptions attached to them, and few of them actually have links. Of the organizations that have links, a number are outdated and/or broken links. As a result, KUF scores 1/2 in terms of effective cross-linking.

Overall, KUF scored 3/5 on this CSF; the most immediate concern with regards to creating effective connectedness for KUF is increasing the quality and quantity of their cross-linking with other sites.

CSF #8: Understand Internet Culture

As the Internet has grown, it has evolved its own cultural values and customs. As such, when any organization ‘goes online’, it would do well to respect these norms, as ignoring them will turn users away from the website (Huff, et al. 2000). Important concepts to remember include making the website

easy to understand and navigate, avoiding the use of spam (large amounts of unwanted e-mail) or forced registration, under- or over-utilization of graphics, and creating a frequently asked questions page.

As the Internet has grown, so too has the importance of respecting the Internet's customs. As such it is important for all organizations to consider the Internet culture in designing their own website, and this CSF was weighted at 3/5. Points were awarded for ease of navigation and effective organization (2 points), maintenance of convenience and integrity (1 point), and overall visual appeal (2 points).

Analysis

One of the main reasons that customers leave websites without making a purchase is that they experienced difficulties while navigating the website; worse yet, these customers are less likely to revisit the site (Schaffer 2000). Usability study participants found the KUF website difficult to use, and gave a mean score of 1.67/5 for organization. There are two key problems with the organization of the KUF website – firstly, the content is improperly prioritized, emphasizing the wrong information (e.g. on the 'Make a Donation' page, tax receipt information is mentioned before the section on how to donate). Secondly, most pages on the website are formatted into a 'wall of text', with long paragraphs and few bulleted lists. Overall, KUF scores 0.5 out of 2 in organization and ease of navigation.

KUF does not ask anyone to register for anything on the website unless the individual chooses to make a donation, and the organization does not utilize mass e-mailing techniques. As a result, KUF scores 1/1 on this criterion. Finally, visual appeal, defined as the design of the website in terms of audiovisual characteristics and creative elements (Korgaonkar, O'Leary and Silverblatt 2009), correlates with whether or not the user planned to return to the site (Van der Heijden 2003). The results of the usability study of KUF showed that participants rated KUF badly on visual appeal – mean scores were 2.22/5 for use of fonts and colors, and 2.27/5 for the use of graphics on the site. General complaints in regards to

the visual appeal of the site were a lack of color, hardly any pictures of children, and far too much reading for the average user. The lack of an FAQ page was also complained about. Thus, KUF received a score of 1/2 for visual appeal.

Overall, KUF scored 3.5/5 on this CSF; while the organization respects the Internet norms looking down upon spam and forced registration, their website is poorly designed, and it tends to frustrate users.

Website Design Critique

Another key component influencing the success of an organization is the design and layout of their website. Poorly designed e-commerce websites with low navigability result in decreased sales on e-commerce websites (Perboteeah, Valacich and Wells 2009). Additionally, website usability has been connected to increasing customer loyalty (Casalo, Flavian and Guinaliu 2008). Four general website design principles are contrast (making varying elements “very different”), repetition (maintaining a consistent layout throughout the site), alignment (building connections between elements), and

proximity (grouping relevant information together);

following these principles leads to increased usability (Haskayne School of Business MIS Department 2009).

The website makes good use of contrast; an example of this can be seen in figure 3, where the links across the top of the page are strikingly different from the content on the page. However, in other places on the website, plain text was formatted to look very similar to a link. Overall, the website has a very consistent layout, maintaining the same links in the top

Figure 3. Contrast between the top navigation bar and the rest of the web page



navigation bar and at the very bottom of each web page on the site. Additionally, the fonts used throughout the website are consistent. The website has text aligned for the most part flush against the image on the left side of the web pages; however, there are instances where there appears to have been an arbitrary decision to center-align certain sections of text, throwing off the page's alignment. Finally, the site does not make effective use of proximity, as information is scattered throughout the site – for example, information regarding how to donate tickets is found on three different web pages, even though one of these pages is specifically titled 'Make a Donation'.

Summary of Results

The weighted scores obtained by KUF for each of the CSFs are listed in Table 2. Overall, the KUF organization obtained a weighted score of 15.8/27, or 58.3%. In particular, three critical

Table 2. Raw score, percentage, weight, and weighted score for each critical success factor.

Critical Success Factor	Score (/5)	Percentage Score	Weight	Weighted Score
Add value	2.5	50%	5	2.5
Focus on a niche	4.5	90%	3	2.7
Maintain flexibility	2	40%	1	0.4
Get the technology right	3	60%	4	2.4
Manage critical perceptions	2.5	50%	5	2.5
Excellent customer service	2.5	50%	4	2.0
Create effective connectedness	3	60%	2	1.2
Understand Internet culture	3.5	70%	3	2.1
TOTAL	-	-	27	15.8

success factors need to be addressed with the development of a new website – adding value, managing critical perceptions, and providing excellent customer service. KUF did not score well in these factors, all of which are important and relevant to the organization. Another important consideration regarding the

website for KUF is its overall design and layout. While the KUF website was satisfactory in its utilization of contrast and repetition, the alignment and proximity of website elements can be improved significantly. Based on the results from table 2, a number of recommendations were determined. These recommendations are designed to improve the performance of KUF along as many critical success factors as possible.

Recommendations

Based on the data and analysis conducted, the following four broad changes are recommended in order to improve the organization's adherence to the critical success factors and website design principles:

1. Improve the user's entry into the KUF website

One of the problems with the KUF website is its inability to cater effectively to its various stakeholders – donors/sponsors, entertainment organizations, and partner agencies. While the information that these groups would need is in fact available on the website, it is difficult to find, as evidenced by data from the usability study. To this end, one of the best things KUF could do is to offer these groups a more personalized experience, so that the user of the website gets only the information they are looking for, as opposed to other information they're not interested in.

To achieve this, two steps need to be taken. Firstly, KUF should create a 'splash' page appearing the first time a user enters the website. This splash page would allow the user to select whether they are a donor, a partner agency, or a child, allowing for personalization of the user's experience.

This personalization would be maximized through having separate 'home' pages for each stakeholder group, which would display only the relevant information for that group (e.g. the home page for ticket donors would feature information on ticket donation, security and KUF programs, as well as links to make donations and access the privacy policy). By using cookies, the organization would be able to ensure that returning users automatically go to the appropriate home page. Through the addition of a

splash page and separate homepages for each stakeholder group, KUF would be able to address improving critical perceptions (CSF #5) and also would be better prepared for the situations requiring it to maintain flexibility (CSF #3). As a result, the website would provide better customer service (CSF #6) and add far more value (CSF #1) to the organization.

2. Improve the website's ease of use and navigation

Once the user has entered the website, organization and ease of use become vital. Currently, users became extremely frustrated with the KUF website. To improve the user experience, KUF needs to organize the website into task-oriented pages, ensuring that information is not duplicated on multiple pages (thus eliminating the data integrity problem mentioned in CSF #3). Additionally, the information on the web pages needs to be prioritized appropriately. While users were able to quickly determine the correct page to go to, finding the information on the page was very difficult. Finding the right information quickly is key to a website's efficiency (Ducoffe 1996), and thus important information, such as how to donate, needs to be clearly displayed towards the top of the page. Also, the sponsors and partners page should be organized such that the 'entertainment events' and 'ticket partners' sections of the page are indexed, with links for each section of the alphabet (e.g. 'Ticket Partners A-F'). These pages must also be checked periodically to ensure that all links are working, and more links should be added to create effective connectedness (CSF #7). Finally, KUF needs to add an FAQ page (CSF #8), which answers common questions, providing links to the appropriate page. This FAQ page serves to give potential customers an overall understanding of the organization, and can thus contribute to the organization's brand awareness (CSF #2) and improve critical perceptions (CSF #5).

3. Provide more user-oriented, interactive content

The KUF website currently provides a large amount of information. However, nearly none of its content is interactive, and as a result, the website becomes less interesting to users. KUF would add value (CSF #1) through the addition of a 'Letters from the Kids' section, in which they post images of thank-you

letters from ticket recipients in chronological or event-based order. The frequent updating of this page, along with the 'What's New' page (which could include content such as a web poll for ticket recipients to rate their experiences), would take the website from a basic operational level of web presence to an interactional level (CSF #4). Finally, KUF needs to give a 'face' to the organization by placing more descriptions and pictures of employees on the 'Contact Us' page, in order to manage critical perceptions of the website more effectively (CSF #5).

4. Take advantage of the website as a potential donation-generating tool

Lastly, the KUF website is grossly underutilized for the purposes of generating donations (revenue). The framework for collecting monetary donations online is already in place through CanadaHelps.org and PayPal™, but these options are not marketed effectively. Placing prominent links to CanadaHelps.org and PayPal™ on the sidebar of *each* web page in the site, along with direct promotion of specific 'Kids Count' events (by informing users which specific event they are donating to...e.g. 'Donate now to send a child to the Grey Cup') would greatly increase donations to the site (adding value, CSF #1) while at the same time taking the website into the 'transactional' realm of operational web presence (CSF #4), improving the site's trustworthiness (CSF #5) and providing excellent customer service by allowing customers to see the benefits of donating tickets quickly and easily (CSF #6).

Conclusion

KUF has a website that scores a marginal pass (58.3%) when assessed on the basis of critical success factors. This leaves a lot of room for improvement during a site redesign, and KUF would benefit most from addressing adding value, maintaining excellent customer service, ensuring positive critical perceptions, and creating effective connectedness. To achieve this end, KUF should personalize the user's entry into their website, improve the website's ease of use and navigation, provide more user-

oriented and interactive content, and utilize the revenue-generating capabilities of CanadaHelps.org and PayPal™.

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Appendix A – Usability Study

The usability study conducted as part of this report consisted of an informed consent form, a booklet of instructions, and a survey for participants to fill out. Participants were asked to gauge their initial impressions of the Kids Up Front site. After this, the participants were instructed to attempt to find a registration form a partner agency could fill out if they were trying to partner with Kids Up Front. Finally, the participants were instructed to assume the role of a donor considering donating two Calgary Flames tickets, and were told to find certain information that would be required in order to donate the tickets. While performing these tasks, participants' computer screens were recorded using CamStudio™ software, allowing for detailed analysis afterwards.

In this appendix, you will find copies of the informed consent form, participant instructions booklet, participant survey, and the summarized results of the study. To obtain the raw data, please contact Omar Khan at ofkhan@ucalgary.ca and he will be able to provide it.

November 12, 2009

A usability assessment of the Kids Up Front Calgary website

OMAR KHAN, LARA SCHMITZ, SANYA LAKHANI, BRIANNA DONOVAN, and JING YU Principal Investigators

Dear Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research project - a usability assessment of the Kids Up Front website, which we are completing as part of our course in Management Information Systems at the University of Calgary. This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you an idea of what the project is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of study: The goal of the project is to assess the usability of the current Kids Up Front Calgary (<http://www.kidsupfront.com/CAL-about.htm>) website comparatively with a new proposed layout based on Kids Up Front Edmonton (<http://www.kidsupfrontedmonton.com>), and to provide recommendations on how best to improve the website's design to make it more user-friendly.

Your participation in the study: Your participation will involve a usability study consisting of two stages. In the first stage, you will be asked to complete three tasks on the current Kids Up Front Calgary website using a computer: registering as a charity partner with Kids Up Front, and finding at least two ways to donate tickets. With your permission, you will be recorded doing these tasks using Camtasia Studio™ screen-capture software. You will then repeat these tasks on the Kids Up Front Edmonton website. Once this is complete, you will be provided with a written questionnaire regarding your user experience while performing these tasks and allowing you to compare between the two website layouts.

Publication of results: Your interview, and any other material we collect, will be used as the basis for the production of a report outlining the usability of the Kids Up Front website, and assessing Critical Success Factors related to Kids Up Front. The report will be accessible to the instructor of the MGIS 317 course (Dr. Mohammad Rahman), the marker of the project, to other students taking the MGIS 317 course (via a PowerPoint presentation), and members of the Kids Up Front organization.

Risk to you: There are no risks associated with this project; at no point in the report or presentation will any participants be listed by name.

Informed consent: Before we can begin the usability study, we need your informed consent. You can provide this by reading and signing this form. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time, including after the interview begins and any time up to two weeks before the submission of our assignment on December 4, 2009. If you withdraw, any material collected during our contact with you will be destroyed and will not be used in any way in the analysis and writing of the research results. You are free to request more information about the study and you are also free to refuse to answer any specific questions during the interview.

Confidentiality and anonymity: Any information collected will remain anonymous and confidential. Names, identities will not be used in our submitted assignment, and care will be taken to ensure that any descriptions of situations or direct quotations cannot be connected to you. Of course, you have the right to waive anonymity.

Storage of materials: All materials, including tapes, transcripts of tapes, and any notes our group might make, will remain confidential. Only my group plus the course instructor will be able to access that information. Any research notes and consent forms will be stored for two years under lock and key (or in a password-protected folder for computer data), including during the data collection phase.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigator or the university from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to request more information about the study or to withdraw from it at any time, and you are also free to refuse to answer any specific questions during the interview. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact Omar Khan, by e-mail at ofkhan@ucalgary.ca, or by phone at 403-619-8496. You may also contact Lara Schmitz, by e-mail at laraschmitz@yahoo.ca, or by phone at 403-921-7609.

1. Do you agree to participate in the study according to the conditions outlined above?

YES

NO

2. May we record the study using screen-capture software?

YES

NO

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's Signature _____ Date _____



*A USABILITY ASSESSMENT OF KIDS UP FRONT
CALGARY*

PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS/SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION A: Informed Consent

- Read through the entire consent form, and ask if you have any questions at all.
- Circle your answer to each question, and give the form to the investigator.

SECTION B: Initial Impression

Background:

The purpose of this task is to allow you to familiarize yourself with Kids Up Front, and make initial observations regarding the website.

Instructions:

1. Open up the Mozilla Firefox™ or Internet Explorer™ web browser
2. Enter the following URL: <http://www.kidsupfront.com/CAL-about.htm>
3. Looking at the page that loads up, please answer the questions under the 'Initial impression' section for Kids Up Front Calgary.
4. Enter the following URL: <http://www.kidsupfrontedmonton.com>
5. Looking at the page that loads up, please answer the questions under the 'Initial impression' section for Kids Up Front Edmonton.

SECTION C: Registering as a Charitable Partner

Background:

One of the main purposes of the Kids Up Front website is to communicate with charitable organizations. One of the most important steps in this process is getting the charitable organization to register with Kids Up Front (only charities approved by the Government of Canada can register). In this task, you will assume the role of an employee of a charitable organization, trying to register with Kids Up Front.

Instructions:

1. Open up the Mozilla Firefox™ web browser
2. Enter the following URL: <http://www.kidsupfront.com/>
You are now at the Kids Up Front homepage. From here, in order to get a better idea of

how easy or difficult the website is to navigate, the instructions will only tell you *what* to do, not *how* to do it. If you have any difficulties, try any help features available on the website. However, if after consulting these, you are still stuck, talk to the investigator.

3. Navigate the website, looking for a registration form for charities to use when registering with Kids Up Front **Calgary** (it will be a .pdf file).
4. Fill out the section of the survey under 'Registering a charity' category for Kids Up Front **Calgary**.
5. Enter the following URL: <http://www.kidsupfrontedmonton.com/>
6. Navigate the website, looking for an e-mail address you can use to register your charity.
7. Once you have found the e-mail address, fill out the 'Registering a charity' section for Kids Up Front **Edmonton**.

SECTION D: Donating Tickets

Background:

The other main function of the Kids Up Front website is to provide information to people and organizations interested in donating tickets. In this task, you are going to assume the role of a person planning to donate two Calgary Flames tickets to Kids Up Front.

Instructions:

1. Open up the Mozilla Firefox™ or Internet Explorer™ web browser.
2. Enter the following URL: <http://www.kidsupfront.com>
You are now at the Kids Up Front homepage. From here, in order to get a better idea of how easy or difficult the website is to navigate, the instructions will only tell you *what* to do, not *how* to do it. If you have any difficulties, try any help features available on the website. However, if after consulting these, you are still stuck, talk to the investigator.
3. Navigating the Kids Up Front **Calgary** website, try to find the following information (and write it down below; if you can't find something, just write "can't find it"):
 - a. A contact phone number for ticket donations: _____
 - b. Two places you can drop-off tickets when donating:
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____

c. Four pieces of information you need to tell Kids Up Front when donating tickets:

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Please answer the following questions regarding your experience with Kids Up Front Calgary. Use the following scale to answer the questions:

	1	2	3	4	5	
	Very Unsatisfactory/ Very Unsafe		Neutral		Very Impressive/ Very Safe	

1. Rate the **use of graphics** on Kids Up Front Calgary pages while:

a. Initial impression	1	2	3	4	5
b. Registering a charity	1	2	3	4	5
c. Donating tickets	1	2	3	4	5

2. Rate the **use of colors and fonts** on Kids Up Front Calgary pages while:

a. Initial impression	1	2	3	4	5
b. Registering a charity	1	2	3	4	5
c. Donating tickets	1	2	3	4	5

3. Rate the **organization and spacing** of Kids Up Front Calgary pages while:

a. Initial impression	1	2	3	4	5
b. Registering a charity	1	2	3	4	5
c. Donating tickets	1	2	3	4	5

4. What could Kids Up Front Calgary do to **improve** the site's visual appeal?

5. Rate the **ease of use** of Kids Up Front pages while:

a. Initial impression	1	2	3	4	5
b. Registering a charity	1	2	3	4	5
c. Donating tickets	1	2	3	4	5

6. Rate the **usefulness of help features** on Kids Up Front Calgary's website:

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
--	---	---	---	---	---	-----

7. What could Kids Up Front Calgary do to **improve** the site's **ease of use and help features**?

8. Rate **how safely** you feel your information would be kept by Kids Up Front:

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

9. What could Kids Up Front do to improve your **sense of security** while dealing with them?

10. Identify the **best** part of the Kids Up Front Calgary website:

11. What makes it the best part of the website?

12. Identify the **worst** part of the Kids Up Front Calgary website:

13. What makes it the worst part of the website?

14. Were you able to find all the information you were looking for?

15. Add any additional comments you have about using Kids Up Front Calgary's website:

Finally, please answer the following questions *comparing* the two sites:

1. Which site was *easier* to navigate?

2. Which site was *more interesting*?

3. Which site had more useful links?

4. Overall, which site do you prefer?

Thank you for your time!

Usability Study Results

Average Numerical Scores

- Initial Impression:
 - Use of Graphics: 3.17/5
 - Use of Fonts/Colors: 2.67/5
 - Organization/Spacing: 2.83/5
 - Ease of Use: 3.50/5
- Registering as a charity
 - Use of Graphics: 1.33/5
 - Use of Fonts/Colors: 1.83/5
 - Organization/Spacing: 1.33/5
 - Ease of Use: 1.50/5
- Donating Tickets
 - Use of Graphics: 2.33/5
 - Use of Fonts/Colors: 2.17/5
 - Organization/Spacing: 2.00/5
 - Ease of Use: 2.00/5
- Usefulness of any help features 1.33/5
 - Users commented they wish a help feature or a FAQ page existed
- Safety and Security 3.17/5

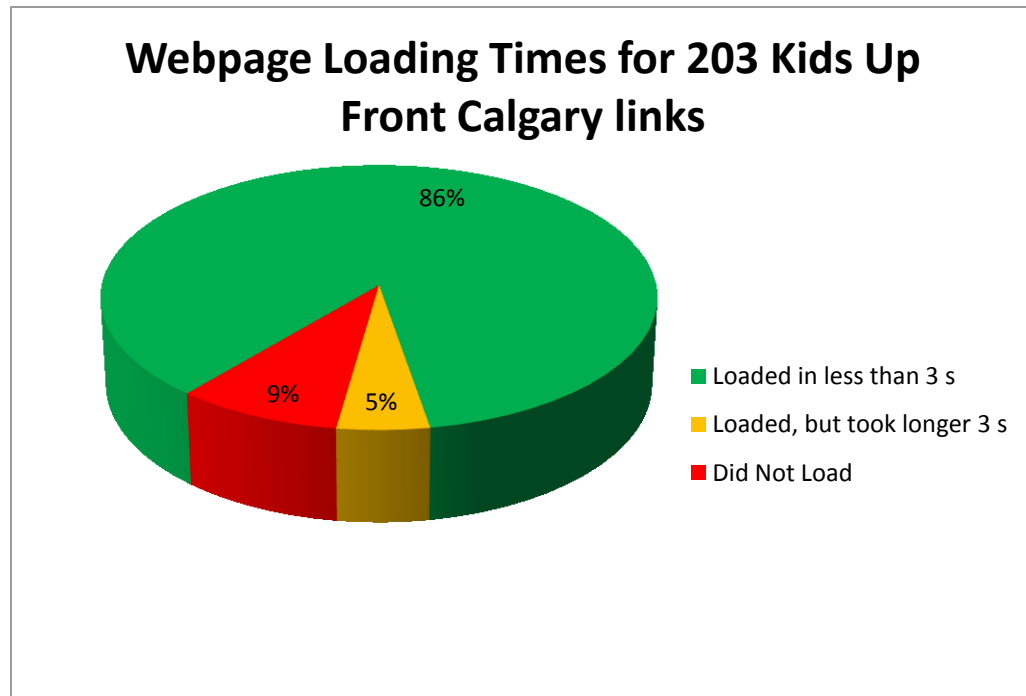
Comparison between Calgary and Edmonton

- Which site has easier navigation? 100% say Edmonton
- Which site is more interesting? 100% say Edmonton
- Which site has more useful links? 100% say Edmonton
- Which site is better overall? 100% say Edmonton

Task Data

- Registering as a Charity
 - Users with no experience of Kids Up Front
 - Average # of links clicked while attempting to complete task: 13.5
 - Average time spent reading web pages for task: 395.78 seconds
 - Users experienced with the Kids Up Front website
 - Average # of links clicked while attempting to complete task: 6.5
 - Average time spent reading web pages for task: 58.78 seconds
 - What does this mean?
 - The learning curve on the Kids Up Front Calgary website for agency partners is **statistically significant in terms of time required to complete the task** (one-tailed two-sample t-test, $t = 2.6972$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that the website is one that is *not* easy to use, as you have to get used to where things are on the website before you can find stuff.
 - This is supported by verbal comments and frustration shown by novice survey takers – more than one novice user commented that if they weren't doing the survey, they wouldn't have even bothered to stay on the site, and one user even ended up at the registration form for CanadaHelps.org instead of for Kids Up Front because that was easier to find...this means that the learning curve is steep enough **to turn away potential agency partners**.
- Donating Tickets
 - Users with no experience of Kids Up Front
 - Average # of links clicked while completing task: 3
 - Average time spent reading web pages for task: 344.53 seconds
 - Average % of information the users actually found: 67.86%
 - Users experienced with Kids Up Front website:
 - Average # of links clicked while completing task: 3
 - Average time spent reading web pages for task: 86.83 seconds
 - Average % of information the users actually found: 100.00%
 - What does this mean?
 - The learning curve on the Kids Up Front Calgary website for potential ticket donors, while being insignificant in terms of number of links (meaning that the right PAGE is easy to find), **is statistically significant in terms of time required to complete the task** (one-tailed two-sample t-test, $t = 5.6719$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that even though the right PAGE is easy to find, the INFORMATION itself on the page is not.
 - Once again, verbal and written frustration supports this observation. The learning curve for potential donors is steep enough **to turn away potential ticket donors**.

- Page Load Times
 - Average Page Load time (not including pages/links that did not load): 1.71 seconds
 - This load time is VERY fast. Likely due to a lack of graphical elements on the webpage. The fast load time indicates that Kids Up Front can **increase the number of graphics on their page WITHOUT** worrying about load times being too long.
 - Broken Links:



Comments on the Survey

- How can Kids Up Front Calgary improve the site's *visual appeal*?
 - "There is no color – the site is boring, even annoying. It's ugly and does not hold my attention at all. It needs color!"
 - "Put a couple more pictures of happy kids, boldly write important information and use useful headings like "Register Your Charity" and "Donate Now"
 - "Use nice fonts and add more colors"
 - "[Use] more graphics and less of a white background"
- What could Kids Up Front Calgary do to improve the site's *ease of use/help features*?
 - "Organize the most important info to pop out or show up first"
 - "They need to organize the information better. This site isn't helpful. Sitting here searching for information may just change my mind about donating – it's not worth the hassle."
 - "Make their links bigger and bolder"

- Use big, bold headings and clearly labeled words in headings like 'Register Your Charity'. Also, make the site more colorful and appealing"
- "There's too much to read on this site. Every single page you go to has tons of reading to do. It takes forever!! Reduce the amount of text, especially on the homepage and other pages people commonly go to. Also, make the links *task-oriented* instead of categorized the way they are now."
- How could Kids Up Front improve your *sense of security* while dealing with them?
 - "Make their site look more professional"
 - "Have a privacy policy clearly accessible. It's a good start with the CRA information easily available..."
 - "If they improve their website, people may think they're actually a valid organization and actually trust them"
- The *best* part about the website
 - "The logo with the happy face" ← 4 people
 - "Pictures of the kids" ← 3 people
 - "Tab bar on the top of the page" ← 2 people
- The *worst* part about the website
 - "The organization is horrible" ← 4 people
 - "The font"
 - "The time required to search for information"
- Additional comments
 - "I truly did not enjoy using this website, and I didn't find it useful"
 - "Make this site more appealing and colorful, and give more information about what Kids Up Front is. Advertise the Kids Up Front brand better"
 - "Add color, make the site more FUN!!! The information is okay overall but the look must be improved"
 - "The website needs a professional look badly. The Edmonton one is a good start. It's far more organized and easier to read. And there's so many links on the Calgary one that don't work"

Appendix B: Team Contract



October 9, 2009

TEAM CONTRACT

MGIS 317 L04 GROUP 410

OMAR KHAN

LARA SCHMITZ

SANYA LAKHANI

BRIANNA DONOVAN

JING YU

Team Goals

- i. Obtain a grade of 'A' on the group project (min. 138 out of a possible 150 marks)
- ii. Provide Kids Up Front with practical analyses and recommendations to assist in increasing public awareness of Kids Up Front and its website
- iii. Design quality improvements to the business processes of Kids Up Front, increasing both efficiency and effectiveness

Group Meetings

iv. Frequency of Meetings

1. Meetings will be held on a weekly basis, on Monday afternoons from 2-3 pm.
2. Meeting time is subject to change as determined by group consensus
3. Meetings may be cancelled, or additional meetings scheduled, as determined by group consensus

v. Location of Meetings

1. Meetings will be held in MacKimmie Library workrooms
2. Omar is responsible for booking library workrooms for group meetings
 - a. Workrooms will be booked **before** 3 pm on Thursday afternoons
 - b. An e-mail will be sent to all group members regarding the room used for a meeting, and the room will be posted up on the wiki

vi. Meeting Chair

1. Chairmanship of meetings will be rotated on a meeting-by-meeting basis
2. Meeting chair is responsible for e-mailing all group members regarding meeting agenda no later than Sunday evening

vii. Agenda

1. The agenda for any meeting will be posted on the wiki, and will be emailed to all group members, the evening before the meeting
2. The first ten minutes of the meeting will be reserved for any additions/changes to the agenda, and for review/analysis of Kids Up Front programs and website

viii. Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting minutes will be recorded by an appointed member of the group
2. Appointment of members will be rotated on a meeting-by-meeting basis
3. All minutes for group meetings will be posted on the group wiki

ix. Absenteeism

1. Under normal circumstances, a member of the group missing a meeting must inform all group members by Friday afternoon of their absence

2. Exceptional circumstances will be considered via consensus by the entire group, provided that notice to the group was provided as soon as was reasonably possible
3. Group members missing a meeting without cause will be deducted between 5 and 10 marks
 - a. Penalty will be as determined via consensus by the remainder of the group

Division of Labor

- x. As different group members have different strengths and weaknesses, all project components will be divided in such a manner as to emphasize as many strengths as possible
- xi. Division of labor will be such that each group member is assigned an equitable time commitment to the project, based on estimates of the time required for each task

Other Group Rules

xii. Member Conduct

1. Professionalism – Group members shall act towards the Kids Up Front organization and towards other group members in a professional manner
2. Punctuality – Group members are to attend all group meetings on time, or provide sufficient notice as outlined in section B.vi
3. Attentiveness – Group members are to act to minimize distractions during group meetings, by silencing electronic devices, and using laptop computers only for project related tasks
4. Understanding the Organization – Group members are expected to be familiar with Kids Up Front and be prepared for discussion in group meetings on a weekly basis

xiii. Decision Making

1. All group decisions will be made by consensus

xiv. Conflict Resolution

1. Conflicts involving one group member's performance
 - a. First infraction – Group member must buy the group coffee and donuts at next group meeting
 - b. Subsequent infractions – Deduction of between 5 and 25 marks, as deemed appropriate by group consensus
2. Conflicts involving disagreements between two or more group members
 - a. First attempt at resolution will be discussion between all group members at a group meeting
 - b. If no resolution can be found through consensus after discussion, a majority vote will be used

- c. Every effort should be made to avoid involving the professor, and if the situation is such that the professor's intervention is required, all group members should be informed of this before the professor is contacted

xv. **Communication**

- 1. Group communication will primarily be through meetings and the group wiki
- 2. E-mail will also be used to inform group members of meetings and agendas

Appendix C: Client Agreement

3

MGIS 317

Student Team Name & Number: The Subscribers (MGIS 317 L04 Group 410)

CLIENT APPLICATION AGREEMENT

NOTE: BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT YOU WILL WAIVE CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUETo: Haskayne School of Business, Project OfficeParticipating Organization: KIDS UP FRONT FOUNDATION (CALGARY)Organization Address: 5th fl, 630 3 Ave SW Calgary AB

In consideration of the Project Office allowing my participation in the Project Placement Program, I agree as follows:

1. I understand that the Project Office offers a program for business information systems projects conducted by the students of the University of Calgary. The program is academic in nature and exists solely for the benefit of the participating students. These students do not hold themselves out to be professionals or experts in any areas and therefore can only provide me with information and *not* advice.
2. Upon completion, this agreement only guarantees the application to be part of the Project Placement Program; it does not guarantee placement with a student or student team in said Program.
3. Any use or reliance which I make of the business information or software that I receive is at my sole responsibility. The Project Office accepts no responsibility for any damages suffered as a result of decisions or actions based on the information or software that I receive from the students. Further, following completion of the project for course purposes, the students will have no obligation or responsibility to perform any additional development or maintenance work on any delivered software or documentation which may have been a part of the project.
4. I expressly consent to the gathering of non-confidential information by the students. I understand that a consultant-client relationship is not being formed.
5. Any information, software or project papers submitted by me or by the students to the Project Office will be kept by the Project Office for one year and will then be destroyed unless stipulations are made via a separate agreement. No reproduction of information will occur without prior consent. All contact information from the Client Application Agreement, including name, address and type of project assigned may be kept on the Project Office database indefinitely, even if my project is not placed with a student group, in order to be a more effective and useful Project Office.
6. This information is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Section 32). It is collected in order to maximize the learning experience of the students at the University of Calgary.
7. I have read and understood this agreement and am aware that by signing this agreement I am waiving any rights to legal action I might otherwise have against the Project Office, The Haskayne School of Business, Faculties of Law, Science, Engineering and any other University of Calgary areas, any individuals or employees retained by these entities, and the students assisting me.

Signed this 8 day of Oct 2009Participant's Name (print): KARA SCARLETTParticipant's Signature: Kscarlett

Witness

Appendix D: Peer Assessment

Peer Assessment Form


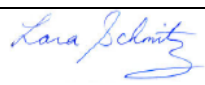



Your project is now essentially completed. Your last responsibility is to conduct an open and fair assessment of each member's contribution to the success of this project. You have had ample time over the last three months to identify and deal with any team issues. .

Please fill out the table below in consultation with all your team members. Your assigned percentages will act as a strong guideline by your instructor for determining each student's peer component mark. It is highly recommended that you do not complete this form until your project is totally finished and ready to be submitted. That is, your in-class presentation, your client presentation, and your bound report are all completed.

Remember that if someone is assigned more than 100 points then someone else must be assigned less than 100 so that the total number of points assigned is 100 x the number of team members. Numbers greater than 100 will be carried through in calculations for that individual's peer mark component of their final project mark.

This sheet is to be completed, signed by each team member, and handed in to your instructor by the due date. If you wish, you may attach this form to your report.

Team Name: **The Subscribers – Group 410** Date: **November 29, 2009**

NAME	SIGNATURE	AVERAGE	ACTUAL
Omar Khan		100	
Lara Schmitz		100	
Brianna Donovan		100	
Sanya Lakhani		100	
Jing Yu		100	
		100	
	Total (100 x number of members)		

The total of the "Average" column must equal the total of the "Actual" column

Appendix E: Team Assessment

Team Goals

1. Obtain a grade of 'A' on the group project (min. 138 out of a possible 150 marks)

STATUS: Pending assignment mark

2. Provide Kids Up Front with practical analyses and recommendations to assist in increasing public awareness of Kids Up Front and its website

STATUS: Achieved

How the goal was accomplished:

- Based on the usability study data, it was clear that people wanted a website that works; now that Kids Up Front can develop one the works well, people will use it

3. Design quality improvements to the business processes of Kids Up Front, increasing both efficiency and effectiveness

STATUS: Achieved

How the goal was accomplished:

-

The team functioned very well; there were no conflicts, every group member contributed to the final project, and all group members came to all meetings or gave sufficient notice. All group members adhered to the team contract.

Appendix F: Client Evaluation

Client evaluation of recommendations not available at this time; will be handed in separately.